

## FOIBLES OF MUSICIANS

Eccentric Moods and Manners of the Great Composers.

## THE MADNESS OF GENIUS.

Beethoven's Strange Abstraction and Queer Habits—The Odd Contract That Mozart Insisted on Signing. Meyerbeer Inspired by Thunder.

When listening to the wonderful strains of Beethoven's immortal symphonies and sonatas it is difficult to imagine that they could come from the pen of such an eccentric man. Though musicians are, as a rule, men with many peculiarities, Beethoven was probably the most extraordinary of them all.

He wrote his music in all sorts of places—when dining, walking or conversing with a friend. Often in the midst of a crowded street he would stop and write furiously for a few minutes on the back of a letter or an envelope, oblivious to the bustling crowd about him. Some of his greatest themes were composed when he was walking along in the pouring rain, for in the worst weather he was a familiar figure in the streets of Vienna, and, though often the object of much ridicule and many gibes, he was profoundly inattentive to his surroundings, as his mind was wholly occupied with his music. His friends were not unaccustomed to have him break off in the midst of a conversation and begin to write rapidly some motif which had presented itself to him.

This great composer would play for hours at a stretch, and in order to cool his hands, which often became feverish, he would seize a water jug and walk about the room, pouring the water first on one hand and then on the other, utterly ignoring the fact that there was no receptacle to catch it. This was the cause of many of his hasty retreats from his lodgings, for the slightest complaint would cause him to give notice to quit, so puerile was he at times. As a result he sometimes was paying for no fewer than three different lodgings at the same time, which, after engaging for a month, he had abruptly left in a day.

Though Haydn ranks next to Beethoven on the list of eccentric musicians, still their peculiarities were very unlike. Beethoven lived in the midst of disorder and confusion, while Haydn averred that he could not compose a line unless everything in his study was in its exact place. Even every ornament must be where it belonged.

He always rose early to write, for he found his greatest inspiration when the birds were singing in the dewy morning hours. His most extraordinary characteristic, however, was to don his full court dress, with bow tie, hat and ruffles, and put on his finger a certain ring before he wrote a line, for he declared that he had not a musical idea unless so attired.

Mozart cannot be called eccentric in the same sense as the two mentioned, for they were very retiring—in fact, recluses—while he was to a great extent a man of the world. To him, however, must be credited one of the strangest documents that perhaps have ever been written.

He became engaged to a young woman, and at the request of his future mother-in-law he drew up in the presence of an attorney a contract which bound him to marry one of the woman's daughters within three years, the said daughter always having the liberty to refuse the composer if she wished to marry another. But in case Mozart was unable to carry out his intention through lack of the necessary funds or through the woman's refusal he pledged himself to support her in the condition of a stranger, no matter where or how she lived, all her life. This support was to be a fixed sum paid quarterly or half yearly.

Wagner, too, was not exempt from peculiar fancies. His mind seemed to run to the gressome, and during his lifetime he had his grave constructed. It was in the garden back of his home, and he would often go and look at it that he might not forget its existence. But the worst of it was that he constantly insisted that his friends should remember it, too, and when he was entertaining them at dinner he would suddenly break off the conversation and begin declaiming on eternity and the grave.

"My friends," he would say, "in the midst of life we are in death. Death is a lot that we all must face, even so great a man as myself. I, too, must die. I should like very much to show you my grave, if you will allow me."

And, starting from the dinner table, he would lead the way, followed by his guests, to the corner of the garden where his grave was, and there he would give his companions further dissertations on eternity.

Meyerbeer gathered his thoughts amid the rumble of thunder, the flash of lightning and downpour of rain. In order more fully to expose himself to the stimulating effects of the elements he had constructed for himself at the top of his house a room whose sides were entirely of glass, and here he would hasten at the approach of a storm and amid its fury would have a rush of musical thoughts.

There is a story about him to the effect that once when entertaining friends at dinner he heard a distant rumble of thunder just as the soup course was served, and to the astonishment of his guests he hastened from the room to his musical chamber and left them to take care of themselves for the rest of the evening.

The Italian composer Donizetti court-

ed inspiration by a means which proved so injurious that it caused the premature decay of his faculties. He was accustomed to shut himself in a room with a quantity of music paper, pens and ink and three or four pots of strong coffee. He would then begin to write and drink, and when this supply of coffee was exhausted he would order more and continue to drink it as long as he wrote.

He asserted that the coffee was necessary for his inspiration. The result of this pernicious habit was a yellow, parchment-like complexion, with lips almost jet black and a nervous system which soon caused his breakdown and death.

Rossini was perhaps the laziest of all musicians whose names are famous. He would rarely rise until midday, and often when he woke and the weather was dull or the muse did not inspire him to write he would turn over again and after directions to his servant to be called the following day would sleep blissfully for another twenty-four hours.

He did most of his writing in bed, and before retiring for the night he would place music paper and a pencil near his bedside so that he would not have to move in order to have the means at hand for writing down the musical thoughts which came.

It is told of him that after writing part of a beautiful duet for an opera the sheet on which he was writing fell to the floor and, caught by a puff of wind, was soon beyond his reach. He was too lazy to get up and get it and thereby disturb the nicely arranged bedclothes, so he set to work and wrote another melody, as he could not remember how the first one went. Thus in the opera "Il Turco in Italia" there are two duets for one situation, and singers can choose the one which pleases them best.

Liszt was probably the vainest of great composers and also one of the most capricious. It was only when in the mood that he would play, and if pressed to do so against his will he would often become almost insulting.

It is told of him that after being entertained at dinner he was asked by his hostess to perform on the piano, and on refusing and again being asked he stalked to the piano and, after dashing off a short but brilliant composition he hurried from the room, saying as he went: "There, madam! I have paid for my dinner!"

On a similar occasion, after a dinner party, he was pressed by his host to play. Not being in the mood, however, he refused; but, no doubt thinking that genius needed urging, his host insisted. The musician then walked to the piano and, turning his back to the keyboard, favored the company with one of the popular airs.—Mary Hamilton Talbot in New York Tribune.

**If the Earth Should Stop.**  
The stopping of a projectile always results in the generation of heat. The velocity and weight of a projectile being known, the amount of heat developed by its stoppage can be calculated. In the case of large bodies moving rapidly the result of the calculation is something astounding. For example, the earth weighs 6,000,000,000,000 tons and travels in its orbit at the rate of over eighteen miles a second. Should it strike a target strong enough to stop its motion the heat developed by the shock would be sufficient not merely to fuse the earth, but also to reduce a large portion of it to vapor. It has been calculated that the amount of heat generated by a collision so colossal would equal that obtained from the burning of fourteen globes of coal each equal to the earth in size. And should the earth after its stoppage fall into the sun, as it certainly would do, the amount of heat developed by its impact on the sun would be equal to that generated by the combustion of 5,000 earths of solid carbon.

**The Greatest Man.**  
Who is the greatest man who has ever lived? The question went round a dinner table, and controversy raged from the fish onward. There were two who plumped for Julius Caesar, two more for Napoleon; one, thinking of statues, said Shakespeare, and somebody else, who did not get a hearing at all, murmured Buddha at intervals, while most of the people present who did not know Greek said Aeschylus. But Aristotle won easily. It was not a particularly scholarly assemblage, and one wondered rather how many of Aristotle's enthusiastic devotees could have quoted accurately from him—had ever read him, indeed—since they left college. And all the while probably the greatest man of all ages is peering away among us unnoticed, unrecognized, while we snapshot and interview all the little men or go back to some one who has been dead long enough for us to find out that we may safely praise him.—London Chronicle.

**The Mighty Amazon.**  
The estimated length of the Amazon from its source in the Andes to where it debouches in a mouth forty miles wide into the Atlantic is 4,000 miles. The story is told of a wrecked vessel which was drifting, with her crew on board suffering intense torment for lack of fresh water, which entered the mouth of the Amazon and the sufferers could have had fresh water simply by putting a bucket over the side, but did not know where they were until they got in sight of the land. This mighty river, up which the tide goes 400 miles, is known in the upper part of its course near the Andes as the Marañon, then in the middle course, from Tabatinga to the mouth of its chief affluent, the Rio Negro, as the Solimoes, while for the rest of its course its name is Amazonas or Amazon. A thousand miles from the sea it is four miles in width. Vast and often impassable forests line most of its banks.

## BETTERING A TOWN.

How to Accomplish Something of Importance.

## PERSIST OR YOU WILL PERISH

Perseverance Is the Price of Progress in Improvement Work—How to Keep Up the General Interest—Value of First Impressions.

In all improvement work there must be one or more entering the field who will persist to the end—years if need be—until something worth while is accomplished. The darkest hour is just before the dawn, and opposition to a movement is usually fiercest as a final struggle. When a good stiff fight is made without breaking up a society the fight for the latter is won, for on its side is organization. The opposition, as a rule, has none. There are in every community a few (sometimes very few) indomitable spirits who never give up a task until completion, no matter what obstacles or opposition is to be overcome. In fact, opposition only seems to increase their energy and enthusiasm.

The name "Improvement society," like charity, often covers a multitude of sins; but, as some wit has remarked, "that ain't its regular business." When a society is formed it should not attempt too much. It is first necessary to show the public that you have the general good at heart and that your judgment as to what is most needed is not awry. As a rule, general interest is easy to keep going if you hold weekly or semi-monthly meetings and provide literary and musical programmes or refreshments, but such meetings butter no parsnips. The greatest good is accomplished by those who persistently peg away at every opportunity and really at all times, keeping in view the particular task set, not allowing the public to lose sight of, much less forget it, says the Los Angeles Times. If the subject has to be resurrected every little while the cause grows weaker with each revival. Such a course as here outlined takes rare courage and executive ability if success is to be attained. If it be a billboard fight it often involves antagonizing nearly all the merchants in town—often a majority of the moneyed interests. Nevertheless the right shall ultimately prevail. Stand firm in the right.

Every city and village is interested in attracting home seekers, business men, investors—in fact, capital in any form. How may they expect it unless the place is made inviting? Ungraded, weed grown, treeless streets will never appeal to any one. All will shun such slovenly communities for those that present a neat and thrifty appearance. First impressions are lasting, a fact which every one knows. It being patent to all who have ventured a few miles from home that they have themselves admired both private and public places that were clean and orderly, how can they rest amid surroundings where no evidence of civic pride is manifest?

Seekers for homes or business investments have no time in which to become acquainted with the people of any center of population. They must judge by the general appearance of the district and on to the next. The one which most appeals to them will be the one that is revisited with a view to investment. If on this second visit the attractions still impress, a resident is gained, the place has won over its numerous competitors. Every reader of this article should ask himself if his property, community, village, town or city is bidding for public favor and investments. If so, are you ready for inspection? If not, what are you doing to help yourself and neighbors? Are you a "live un" or are you a "dead un"? Do you really live in your community or are you just staying there, "the world forgetting, by the world forgot"? If you are in the latter class, you should get out of civilization as far as possible, back on the foothills, where you may lead a happy-go-lucky existence, which is altogether natural, a most commendable life, one to be envied by all. Yet so long as you remain amid the artificialities of village or city life keep up your end of the burden, make all really artificial by "slinking up."

Every town should have an improvement society, with committees to work on a few of the plainly manifest tasks that may be found in every community in the land. Have the organization simple and unpretentious, with few rules, but make your work "stick out like a wart on your nose." Get people who will devote some of their time to solving a few of the more difficult problems which appeal to all thinkers as those to be first overcome. First clean your premises, that you may see (without blushing) the dirt and weeds in your neighbor's. Next clean the streets and parkways, sidewalks and public grounds. After this is done tackle the street planting, and do not rest until every street in town is fully planted uniformly with suitable trees.

**To Get Rid of Weeds.**  
The thousands of persons who own suburban homes and live in them during the whole year or for the summer months only have a hard time freeing the walks from unsightly weeds. They might try this remedy with success: Boil two pounds of arsenic and four pounds of sal soda in six gallons of water. To every gallon of the boiling mixture add three gallons of cold water and sprinkle it over the walks while it is warm. Do not put it on after the walks have been wet by the rain or by the hose. Use it when they are very dry and dusty.

## TO MAKE ICE CREAM.

Here is the Right Way to Get Perfect Results.

Many good cooks do not have success in making ice cream. This should not be difficult if it is done in the right way. In the first place, the proportions of salt and ice should be right, and the ice should not be left in large pieces, but crushed with the salt.

One part of ice to three parts of salt is the proportion, and they should be packed firmly in layers. Both should be measured. Rock salt is the best to use, but barrel salt will do if the other cannot be easily obtained.

Be sure that the freezer is perfectly clean and sterilized. Place a three inch layer of finely crushed ice in the tub, cover with one of salt and alternate these layers, packing each down very hard until the mixture is a few inches above the cream in the can.

The crank should not be turned rapidly at first, but slowly, and as the cream begins to harden the crank can be turned more rapidly. When the crank becomes hard to turn take out the beater and stir the cream with a strong porcelain spoon. Press the cream down smoothly and place a cork in the hole where the beater belongs. Then remove the plug and draw off the water.

Then repack the box as before, cover with a piece of carpet and set aside for an hour before serving. The longer it stands the better it will be, even if it stands for three or four hours.

A good way to break the ice into small pieces is to put it in a coarse bag and pound with a strong hammer.

For a delicious uncooked ice cream scald a quart of thin, sweet cream and dissolve in it one and one-half cupsful of sugar. Add a quart of cold cream, two eggs well beaten and two tablespoonfuls of vanilla. Freeze and pack as above directed. This is Philadelphia ice cream and can be made without eggs.

To make lemon ice cream scald one pint each of milk and cream with one-fourth of a pound of sugar. Grate the rinds of three lemons, squeeze out the juice, add half a pound of sugar. Stir this mixture into the scalded milk and cream and when cold freeze.

## FOR BABY'S COMFORT.

A Covering For Crib or Carriage Made of Eiderdown.

To keep the baby warm in crib or carriage nothing equals this novel contrivance called a "baby bunting." To make it take two pieces of eiderdown one yard square, one pink, the other white. Bind them together with pink satin ribbon, putting the pink eiderdown on the outside. Fold together so



A "BABY BUNTING."

that the opening bound in the satin ribbon comes to one side. Turn down the two upper corners to form revers of white. A band of ribbon is put around the center to keep it close, with a large pink bow as a finish.

## A New Tonic.

For the woman who is tired out there has been prescribed a new kind of stimulant.

This is a mixture of grape juice and olive oil. One tablespoonful of the latter to four of grape juice is taken after each meal. If the taste of oil is too strong for some stomachs two more tablespoonfuls of the grape juice may be added.

It is claimed that both serve as excellent medicine. The dose becomes very palatable after awhile. It should always be iced. It builds up the appetite, and the oil lubricates the stomach in a most beneficial way.

## How Polly Saved the Plate.

An old lady had a parrot, which she had bought from a sailor friend, and on taking it home much to her astonishment she found Polly could only say three words, "Get the gun!"

One dark night, when all was still, burglars broke into the house. The silver was kept in the same room as Polly. They crept in as quietly as possible, but before they had time to strike a light a deep voice from the other side of the room said, "Get the gun!" The men were so frightened that they ran off as fast as their legs could carry them. And so Polly saved her mistress' silver.

## In Hanging Pictures.

A safe rule to remember when hanging pictures is that the middle of the picture should be on a level with the eyes. Of course if you are unusually tall this rule does not hold good. Don't mix several kinds and types of pictures together. Let all the water colors, oils or engravings be placed in separate rooms or, at any rate, on different walls. Above all, do not overcrowd your walls. A few well chosen pictures look far better than a number of mediocre ones.

## You Cannot Answer These Questions!

1—Why do you continue bathing your knees and elbows one at a time, when you can stretch out in a full bath tempered to suit you, and can do so every morning if you wish?

2—Why pump and carry water for your kitchen and laundry work when you can have it at hand for the turning of a faucet?

3—Why take chances on drinking germ-filled cistern water when you can get it from a large reservoir filtered through the best filter plant South of the Ohio River?

4—Why have a dry, dismal-looking yard when you can have it filled with green grass and blooming flowers, and can at the same time get rid of the dust in the street?

5—Why suffer other inconveniences when you can have everything for the comfort and health of your family right in the house?

6—Is it not true that the answer is not "lack of money," but lack of economy and enterprise and indifference to getting the most out of life?

C. F. ATTERSALL, Superintendent

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## NOT DRESSED FOR OCCASION

Niceties of English Etiquette Exemplified by Incident in Sporting Field.

Richard Harding Davis, one of Westchester county's new deputy sheriffs, came into White Plains with his kennel master the other day, says the New York Times. While awaiting his kennel master outside a dog biscuit shop, Mr. Harding Davis discussed sport.

"Sport is as good here as it is abroad," he said, "but abroad they are more punctilious. Your Englishman must always be correct. He has a wardrobe of smooth, sleek, dark clothes for town; a wardrobe of knickers and thick woollens for Alpine winter sports; a wardrobe of flannels for the seashore, and so on, with other wardrobes for deer-stalking, for fox hunting, for driving, even for smoking and drinking."

"I remember once, in my early youth, I was shooting over a duke's covers. A very grave and elegant young marquis was stationed near me. Suddenly the duke shouted to the marquis:

"There goes a hare! Let him have it!"

"But the marquis shook his head. 'I can't, duke,' he said. 'I'm in my pheasant costume.'"

## FIRST MUNICIPAL GOLF LINKS.

Bournemouth was the first local authority in England to start municipal golf links. The charge there is 25 cents a round. Last year the receipts were \$13,990. Nottingham has also some fine municipal links, which are paying well. Sheffield has just been considering a scheme for its own links, and the Brighton corporation has the formation of golf courses on its list of municipal undertakings. At Edinburgh a charge of four cents only is made, although the two links are among the finest in the country. Some of the Scottish burghs have made the pastime the most popular in their list by affording cheap facilities for the game to be played.

## TWO GREAT ORATORS.

As an orator Demosthenes was head and shoulders above the Roman. The great Athenian stands in a class all by himself, if we are to believe the consensus of learned opinion. Cicero, it is said, prided himself on his faculty of extemporizing at need, but probably trusted little to it on great occasions; while with Demosthenes it was the rule never to speak without the most careful preparation. The speeches of both were spoken without manuscript. They would never have made the reputation they did if they had been tied down to their notes.—New York American.

## The Facts.

"These yarns about cooks wearing their mistresses' clothes are all fakes, are they not?"

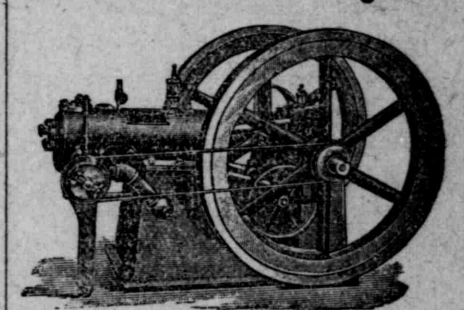
"Of course. Why, my cook wouldn't even condescend to patronize the dressmaker who makes my gowns."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

## Nothing to Square.

"Take home a box of candy or a bunch of flowers to-night?" "What for? I'm sober."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Missed the Crow and Broke a Rib. William Loomis of North Amherst, Mass., aimed a rifle at an exasperatingly impudent crow and the recoil of the gun broke his collar bone and one rib. The crow, uninjured, cawed derisively.

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